

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

repose of his soul, the Bandaresi and other Romans who were present seized the opportunity to urge upon them the necessity of electing an Italian Pope and of maintaining the Apostolic Chair at Rome. The Romans took possession of the gates of the city, and seized upon the shipping in the Tiber. While the nobles, including Onorato Gaetani, Count of Fondi, and Niccolo Orsini, Count of Nola, high officials of the Church, upon whose protection the cardinals could have greatly relied, were expelled, bands of armed contadini and mountaineers from the Sabine and Alban hills came into the city, adding to the general confusion and alarm by their cries and uproar, hustling and threatening the French retainers and servants of the Sacred College. Clearly, the fathers were held in a trap.

Nevertheless, the cardinals did not apparently believe in the seriousness of the danger. They did not think it advisable to summon the Breton and Gascon mercenaries, some eight hundred of whom were within an easy march of Rome, nor necessary (though there was some difference of opinion among them on this point) to take shelter behind the battlements of Sant' Angelo. To the persistent supplications of the authorities of the city to choose a Roman or an Italian for Pope, they answered in general terms that they would elect one who would greatly please them and Italy and all Christendom. The four Italian cardinals, at the instance of the whole College, rebuked the Roman officials for their conduct; but without result.¹ The Senator of Rome, Guido de Pruinis, and the Bandaresi, in the name of the Republic, undertook the protection of the conclave and the guard of the Leonine city.² A proclamation was made, threatening all disturbers of the public order with

¹ Cf. Cardinal Corsini's statement, added to the declarations of his colleagues, Gayet, doc. 27.

³ Fra Gonsalvo, a Dominican, then prior of Santa Sabina, says that they sent to the cardinals to offer a good and pacific guard for the freedom of the conclave, but at the same time to beseech them to console Rome and Italy in the election, and to warn them that, if their choice did not satisfy the Romans, there would be trouble with the people : they feared *ne firte aKquod non debitwn populus faceret*. *Archivw Vaticano*, LIV. 15, f. 57 p.